

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY BONN NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 043595

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, UG

SUBJ: SUMMARY OF USG ACTION ON UGANDAN SITUATION
FOR AMBELLERKMANN IN KAMPALA

REF: BONN 03536

SUMMARY: USG HAS MADE APPROACHES TO CHEIFS OF STATE, AND
UN AND OAU SECGENS RE POSSIBLE INTERVENTION WITH AMIN
REGARDING HIS INTERNMENT OF AMCITS IN UGANDA PRIOR TO MASS
MEETING FEBRUARY 28. PUBLIC EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN IN INTER-
NATIONAL FORA BY USG HAVE BEEN LIMITED TO UNHRC MEETING IN
GENEVA. OFFICIAL REACTION OF USG IN WASHINGTON ONE OF
WATCHFUL CONCERN. PRESS COVERAGE IN US FULL BUT NOT
HYSTERICAL. REGARDING ELLERKMANN'S SUGGESTION THAT
AMERICAN PRESS ATTEMPT COVER MONDAY MEETING, EMBASSY NAIROBI
FEELS SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS COULD NOT BE ASSURED. GUIDANCE
ON ANY REMARKS TO AMERICANS ELLERKMANN MAY BE ABLE TO MAKE
TO AMCITS WILL FOLLOW. END SUMMARY.

PLEASE PASS FOLLOWING SUMMARY TO FOREIGN OFFICE FOR TRANS-

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MISSION TO AMB. ELLERKMANN IN KAMPALA:

1. US EMBASSIES IN POSTS NEIGHBORING UGANDA HAVE BEEN
INSTRUCTED TO INFORM AMCITS IN LOW-KEY FASHION THAT TRAVEL
TO UGANDA WOULD BE INADVISABLE AT THIS TIME. SIMILARLY,
US EMBASSIES IN COUNTRIES WHERE INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS TO
ENTEBBE ORIGINATE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO HAVE AIRLINES WARN

ANY AMERICANS PLANNING ON TRANSITING UGANDA ON OR

AFTER FEBRUARY 28 OF SITUATION THERE.

2. USG HAS MADE FOLLOWING APPROACHES TO CHIEFS OF STATE TO REQUEST THEIR INTERVENTION WITH AMIN:

(A) OAU CHAIRMAN RAMGOOLAM RECEIVED LETTER FROM PRESIDENT CARTER REQUESTING HE USE HIS GOOD OFFICES. RAMGOOLAM'S REACTION WAS THAT HE HAD LOST CREDIBILITY WITH AMIN BY HIS PAST STATEMENTS, AND DID NOT COMMIT HIMSELF.

(B) OAU SECGEN ETEKI WILL RECEIVE LETTER FROM SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE. NO REACTION YET.

(C) SOMALI PRESIDENT SIAD HAS BEEN CONTACTED THROUGH HIS MINISTER OF FINANCE (NOW IN WASHINGTON); HE HAS AGREED TO APPROACH AMIN. SIMILARLY, SUDANESE PRESIDENT NIMEIRI HAS BEEN APPROACHED ON OUR BEHALF THROUGH MINISTER DENG.

(D) SIMILAR DEMARCHES WILL BE MADE TO PRESIDENTS MOBUTU OF ZAIRE, HAYARIMANA OF RWANDA, SADAT OF EGYPT, ASSAD OF SYRIA (LATTER TWO MEETING WITH NIMEIRI IN KHARTOUM AT PRESENT), AND EMPEROR BOKASSA OF CAE. NO REACTION FROM THESE AS OF 1130 GMT FEBRUARY 26.

(E) UN SECGEN WALDHEIM HAS OFFERED TO EXPRESS TO AMIN HIS CONCERN OVER CONVOCAION OF AMERICANS.

3. IN UNHRC SESSION IN GENEVA FEBRUARY 25, US REP LOWENSTEIN MADE STATEMENT SUPPORTING BRITISH MOTION THAT HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN UGANDA WARRANTED FORMAL CENSURE. MOTION WAS SUPPORTED BY FIVE OTHER WESTERN DELEGATES AND COSTA RICA. LOWENSTEIN ALSO STATED THAT MOST RECENT
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EVENTS IN UGANDA WARRANTED SEPARATE CONSIDERATION BY UNHRC AT LATER DATE. UGANDAN DELEGATE REPLIED THAT WESTERN PRESS HAD EXAGGERATED HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN UGANDA.

4. WE HAVE BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH KENYAN AUTHORITIES REGARDING SITUATION IN UGANDA. THEY HAVE ASSURED US OF THEIR COOPERATION IN EVENT OF EVACUATION.

5. INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEEN HELD WITH AMERICAN AND FOREIGN AIR CARRIERS RE POSSIBILITY OF CHARTER IN EVENT OF EVACUATION OF AMCITS FROM UGANDA. NO RPT NO ARRANGEMENTS MADE.

6. WHITE HOUSE SPOKESMAN STATED EVENING FEBRUARY 25 THAT LATEST REPORT FROM UGANDA, INDICATING THAT AMIN WAS REASSURING US THAT MEETING WITH AMCITS WOULD BE FRIENDLY, WAS QUOTE HELPFUL IN ALLAYING CONCERN UNQUOTE.

7. PRESS COVERAGE OF UGANDA SITUATION IN US PRESS HAS

BEEN VERY FULL AND ACCURATE TO DATE. VOICE OF AMERICA
COVERAGE AS OF 1200 GMT FEBRUARY 26 STICKS TO STRAIGHT
REPORTING OF AMIN'S INTENT MEET WITH ALL AMCITS IN UGANDA,

BUT DOES NOT INTEND HOLD THEM HOSTAGE, ACCORDING TO RADIO
UGANDA. WE EXPECT PUBLIC INTEREST TO INCREASE AS MONDAY
MEETING APPROACHES.

8. REACTION TO SUGGESTION FROM AMB. ELLERKMANN THAT
AMERICAN JOURNALISTS COVER MONDAY MEETING WAS NOT RPT NOT
ENDORSED BY AMEMBASSY NAIROBI. THEIR REPLY EXPRESSED
CONCERN THAT SAFETY OF JOURNALISTS COULD NOT BE ASSURED,
AND THAT ANY DECISION TO TRAVEL TO KAMPALA RESTED WITH
JOURNALISTS AND GOVT. OF UGANDA.

9. NONE RPT NONE OF FOREGOING SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED BY
AMB. ELLERKMANN TO AMCITS WHO GATHER IN KAMPALA FOR
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MONDAY MEETING. FURTHER GUIDANCE ON MESSAGE TO AMCITS
WILL FOLLOW.

10. PLEASE EXPRESS OUR DEEP APPRECIATION TO FOREIGN
OFFICE AND FRG EMBASSY KAMPALA FOR THEIR EXCELLENT
COOPERATION.

VANCE

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